

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAJ-01

OMB-01 HEW-06 /102 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8505

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GW

SUBJECT: STRIKE AND LOCKOUT IDLE GERMAN PRINTING
INDUSTRY

SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO A UNION-SPONSORED SELECTIVE STRIKE OVER WAGES, WHICH IDLED 22,700 WORKERS IN MAJOR PRINTING PLANTS, THE EMPLOYER ASSOCIATIONS CALLED A LOCKOUT FOR THE ENTIRE PRINTING INDUSTRY. THE LOCKOUT BEGAN ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT, APRIL 28, AND, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW LOCAL PUBLICATIONS, NO NEWSPAPERS WERE PUBLISHED ON APRIL 29 OR 30. THE UNIONS RESORTED TO THE STRIKE IN AN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A 9 PERCENT PAY INCREASE, WITH A MINIMUM OF DM 140 PER MONTH. THE EMPLOYERS REFUSED TO OFFER A WAGE INCREASE EXCEEDING 5.4 PERCENT, THE RATE OF INCREASE AGREED IN OTHER INDUSTRIES THIS YEAR. THIS WAS THE FIRST UNION-SPONSORED STRIKE THIS YEAR. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW CONTRACT, EMPLOYER AND UNION REPRESENTATIVES FAILED TO REACH AGREEMENT ON A PAY INCREASE. THE PRINTERS' UNION DEMANDED AN INCREASE OF 9 PERCENT, WITH A DM 140 PER MONTH MINIMUM. IN RESPONSE TO CONCILIATION EFFORTS, THE EMPLOYERS OFFERED A PAY INCREASE OF 5.4 PERCENT, ROUGHLY THE AMOUNT ACCEPTED BY WORKERS IN METAL MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION, PUBLIC SERVICES, PRIVATE BANKING AND INSURANCE. AFTER CONCILIATION EFFORTS FAILED ON APRIL 13, THE PRINTERS' UNION CALLED A STRIKE VOTE FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 26; 88.3 PERCENT VOTED FOR A STRIKE. THE UNION'S EXECUTIVE BOARD THEN CALLED AN UNLIMITED SELECTIVE STRIKE WHICH IDLED 22,700 PRINTERS IN THE FRG AND WEST BERLIN. THE STRIKE BEGAN ON APRIL 28 AT 2 P.M.

2. IN RESPONSE TO THE UNION ACTION, THE EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION INSTITUTED A NATION-WIDE LOCKOUT, BEGINNING AT 6 P.M. THE SAME DAY. THERE ARE 145,000 ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED BLUE COLLAR WORKERS IN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PRINTING INDUSTRY. BUT ACCORDING TO MANAGEMENT SOURCES, ONLY 70 PERCENT ARE AFFECTED BY THE STRIKE AND LOCKOUT. THE FEDERAL PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION SAID THAT THE LOCKOUT WAS DESIGNED TO "INSURE AGAINST A DISTORTION OF COMPETITION" AND TO COUNTER THE UNION STRATEGY OF STRIKING ONLY CERTAIN KEY PLANTS IN THE INDUSTRY. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW LOCAL PUBLICATIONS, NO NEWSPAPERS APPEARED ON APRIL 29 AND 30.

3. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SEVERAL BRIEF WILDCAT WALKOUTS IN THE METAL AND PRINTING INDUSTRIES AND IN PUBLIC SERVICES EARLIER, THIS WAS THE FIRST UNION-SPONSORED STRIKE THIS YEAR. IT WAS ALSO THE FIRST STRIKE IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY SINCE 1973 AND THE FIRST LOCKOUT IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY SINCE WORLD WAR II.

4. TO DATE, NEITHER UNION NOR MANAGEMENT HAS REQUESTED GOVERNMENT MEDIATION. THE GOVERNMENT IS EXPECTED TO UPHOLD ITS POLICY AND LET THE PARTIES SETTLE THE DISPUTE THEMSELVES.
HILLENBRAND

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